



Supervised Agricultural Experience Fact Sheet

Ag Service-Learning SAE

"Service-learning offers the opportunity for today's young people and tomorrow's leaders to learn while addressing local needs. Hands-on experiences reinforce learning in the classroom, promoting civic responsibility and showing that citizens working together are a powerful force."

– General Colin Powell, founding chairman of America's Promise

Service-learning is a national initiative and a natural fit for SAEs, as agricultural education and FFA have always promoted community service and development. Ag service-learning opportunities enable students to provide a valuable service to their schools and communities by putting classroom skills into action. An SAE in this area includes anything from coordinating and managing a food drive to implementing a public awareness campaign regarding seatbelt use. According to "Learning in Deed," a report from the National Commission on Service-Learning, school based service-learning is:

- A method of teaching that combines community service with curriculum based learning, linked to academic content and standards.
- About students helping to determine and meet real, defined community needs.
- Reciprocal in nature, benefiting both the community and the student.
- An effective way to encourage and foster active citizenship as part of public education.
- An approach to teaching and learning that can be used in any curriculum area as long as it is appropriate to learning goals.
- For all ages, even the youngest children.

Despite the fact that many ag service-learning projects and programs are not directly tied to agriculture, the link can be made because students apply leadership principles, management skills and knowledge learned in the agriculture classroom. Service-learning also provides a unique opportunity to promote agriculture, FFA and agricultural education to a new and diverse audience. Students can gain valuable experience and earn credit for their SAE while helping others...a win-win for everyone!

Examples of Ag Service-Learning SAE Projects/Programs

- Assist with playground development; help build equipment, plant grass, etc.
- Coordinate a coat donation drive to provide winter coats to families in need.
- Organize community clean-up activities for public parks and roadways.
- Volunteer to help the elderly with home improvement projects.
- Provide free tutoring services for elementary students.
- Initiate a healthy eating campaign in local elementary schools.
- Direct a community beautification project; build planter boxes, plant trees, etc.
- Build "welcome to the community" or "keep the community clean" signage.
- Provide computer technical support services to food banks, shelters, etc.
- Work with area schools on a year-round recycling program.